



Department of Justice

FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY
TUESDAY, JANUARY 16, 2007
WWW.USDOJ.GOV

AG
(202) 514-2007
TDD (202) 514-1888

FACT SHEET: DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE EFFORTS TO STOP GANG VIOLENCE IN AMERICA'S COMMUNITIES

"The effects of violence and gang activity reverberate beyond individuals, beyond a single perpetrator or a single victim. When a young man is murdered, an entire community feels the loss. When a young girl is raped, an entire neighborhood is violated."

-- Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales, 2/15/06

At the direction of the Attorney General, the Department has taken several important steps to address gang violence. First, the Department established an Anti-Gang Coordination Committee to organize the Department's wide ranging efforts to combat gangs. Second, each United States Attorney has appointed an Anti-Gang Coordinator to provide leadership and focus to our anti-gang efforts at the district level. Third, the Anti-Gang Coordinators, in consultation with their local law enforcement and community partners, have developed comprehensive, district wide strategies to address the gang problems in their districts. All of the Department's law enforcement components are engaged in a coordinated effort to combat gang violence.

GangTECC, National Gang Intelligence Center, and Gang Squad

Through GangTECC, the National Gang Intelligence Center, and Gang Squad, the Department has established national coordination, intelligence and enforcement mechanisms aimed at dismantling the most significant, violent, national and regional gangs.

- **Coordination** – The Department has created a new national multi-agency, anti-gang task force- the Gang Targeting, Enforcement, and Coordination Center (GangTECC). GangTECC targets the nation's most violent and far-reaching gangs by bringing together representatives from all of the operational components of the Department, as well as from other agencies. Led by the Criminal Division, the center coordinates overlapping investigations, ensures that tactical and strategic intelligence is shared among law enforcement agencies, and serves as a central coordinating center for multi-jurisdictional gang investigations involving federal law enforcement agencies.
- **Intelligence** – GangTECC works hand-in-hand with the new National Gang Intelligence Center (NGIC). The NGIC integrates the gang intelligence assets of all Department of Justice agencies, and has established partnerships with other federal, state and local agencies that possess gang-related information.

- **Enforcement** – The Criminal Division has established a new Gang Squad, a core team of eight experienced anti-gang prosecutors who serve as the prosecutorial arm of the Department’s efforts to achieve maximum national impact against violent gangs.

Six Site Comprehensive Anti-Gang Program

In March 2006, the Attorney General announced six sites that would receive \$2.5 million in grants part of a new comprehensive initiative that focuses on reducing gang membership and gang violence through enforcement, prevention and re-entry strategies. These sites are: Los Angeles, Tampa, Cleveland, Dallas/Ft. Worth, Milwaukee, and Pennsylvania’s 222 Corridor. The initiative includes the following measures:

- **Enforcement** – Approximately \$1 million per site to help create enforcement programs that focus law enforcement efforts on the most significant violent gang offenders.
- **Prevention** – Approximately \$1 million per site to focus on reducing youth gang crime and violence by addressing the full range of personal, family and community factors that contribute to juvenile delinquency and gang activity.
- **Re-entry** – Approximately \$500,000 per site to create mentor-based reentry assistance programs with faith-based and other community organizations that will provide transitional housing, job readiness and placement assistance, substance abuse and mental health treatment to prisoners re-entering society.

Project Safe Neighborhoods

In May 2001, President Bush announced Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN), a comprehensive initiative to reduce gun crime in America by linking together federal, state and local law enforcement, prosecutors and community leaders. The Attorney General has recently expanded the PSN initiative as part of the Department’s anti-gang efforts.

- In FY 2006, through the PSN initiative, the Department filed 10,425 federal gun crime cases against 12,479 defendants. This is a 66 percent increase in cases filed and a 55 percent increase in defendants prosecuted since FY 2000. In FY 2006, over 93 percent of those offenders received prison terms and over 50 percent were sentenced to three or more years in prison.
- In its first six years, this Administration has more than doubled the number of firearms prosecutions brought in the last six years of the previous Administration. From FY 2001 through FY 2006, the Department filed 58,464 federal firearms cases against 71,019 defendants – more than a 100 percent increase in cases filed from the prior six year period.
- In FY 2006, the Department has provided approximately \$30 million in state and local grants and training and technical assistance to support PSN’s new and enhanced anti-

gang work. Those funds are in addition to the approximately \$10 million in grant funds provided in FY 2006 in support of traditional PSN gun crime reduction programs.

Weed and Seed Initiative

The Weed and Seed Program is a community-based multi-agency approach to law enforcement, crime prevention, and neighborhood restoration. “Weeding” consists of law enforcement and community policing; and “seeding” consists of efforts designed to prevent, intervene, and treat crime, and social and economic distress. There are over 300 Weed and Seed sites, and in FY 2006, over 200 communities received Weed and Seed funding.

International Cooperation

The Department also works with the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of State and our international partners to fight gangs that operate both in the United States and other countries and to ensure that illegal aliens who are gang members are prosecuted and/or removed from the United States.

- The Department has provided training in 2006 to Assistant United States Attorneys on the topic of using immigration offenses as part of anti-gang efforts, and is currently working with countries in Central America to develop more efficient and effective information sharing and repatriation mechanisms.
- The Department has also worked with the Department of Homeland Security on Community Shield Operation, which is aimed at disrupting and dismantling international gangs.

Department of Justice Task Forces

In addition to the Attorney General’s Department-wide Anti-Gang Initiative, each of the Department’s components work with state and local law enforcement on specific programs to curb the threat of gang violence nationwide. These include:

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives Efforts

- The ATF-led Violent Crime Impact (VCIT) teams identify, target and arrest violent criminals to reduce the occurrence of homicide and firearm-related violent crime. These teams include federal agents as well as state and local law enforcement, and are currently deployed in 25 cities across the country.
- In addition to the VCIT initiative, ATF participates with state and local law enforcement and other federal agencies on 110 anti-gang task forces throughout the country.

Drug Enforcement Administration Efforts

- The DEA Mobile Enforcement Team (MET) Program responds to requests from state, local, and tribal law enforcement officials to help stem the rise in drug-related violence and methamphetamine trafficking. Often times, these MET deployments target violent gangs involved in drug trafficking activity, such as the Hell's Angels, Latin Kings, Bloods, Crips, Mexican Mafia, and Gangster Disciples. There are currently 22 METs located throughout the United States and the Caribbean.
- In FY 2006, the METs initiated 30 deployments. Of these, 30 percent were gang related. Additionally, between FY 2005 and 2006, there was a 45 percent increase in the number of the DEA's active Priority Target Organization (PTO) cases that involved gangs.

Federal Bureau of Investigation Efforts

- FBI-led Safe Streets Task Forces focus on dismantling organized gangs by addressing them as criminal enterprises. As of January 2007, the FBI operates more than 170 Task Forces (TFs) in its 56 field offices, including over 130 Safe Streets Task Forces (SSTFs) focused on violent gangs and over 30 SSTFs focused on violent crime.
- The FBI has launched a multi-agency MS-13 National Gang Task Force focused specifically on dismantling MS-13 by increasing the flow of information and intelligence, coordinating investigations, and helping local and State law enforcement more easily identify the gang in their areas.

Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF)

- The OCDETF program targets large, violent, national gangs involved in significant drug trafficking. The number of new gang-related OCDETF investigations increased 37 percent from FY 2005 to FY 2006.

U.S. Marshals Service

- The U.S. Marshals Service (USMS) leads six Regional Fugitive Task Forces, as well as 86 district-based task forces across the country, forming the backbone of the USMS' fugitive apprehension efforts. The Marshals Service's investigative network extends to its three foreign field offices and its Regional Technical Operations Centers, which provide sophisticated electronic and air surveillance support in fugitive apprehensions on the federal, state, and local levels. In FY 2006, Deputy U.S. Marshals and their task force partners apprehended over 88,100 fugitives. Over 1,690 of those fugitives were gang-related.
- In October 2006, Deputy United States Marshals teamed up with thousands of fellow federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies to conduct the largest ever round up of fugitive sex-offenders and wanted gang members. Dubbed "Operation FALCON III" (Federal And Local Cops Organized Nationally), Deputy Marshals and their fellow task

force members arrested 10,773 felony fugitives. This number includes 1,659 sex offenders and 364 gang members.

Prevention and Public Awareness

- Over the past year, nearly all of the United States Attorneys have convened a Gang Prevention Summit, designed to explore additional opportunities in the area of gang prevention. The goal of the summits was to bring together law enforcement and community leaders to discuss best practices, identify gaps in services, and create a prevention plan to target at-risk youth within their individual communities. These summits have reached over 10,000 law enforcement officers, prosecutors, social service providers, prevention practitioners, and members of the faith-based community.
- In partnership with the Ad Council, the Department has created two new PSN public service announcements (PSAs) intended to educate youth about the perils of gun crime and the consequences of joining gangs. The announcements have been distributed to English and Spanish language radio stations nationwide and began airing in early July 2006.
- In addition to the existing anti-gang training and technical assistance provided by Department components, the Department has hosted two Gang Prevention webcasts that are accessible by the public. These webcasts share best practices in gang prevention; identify resources; support and complement the Attorney General's Anti-Gang Initiative; emphasize a community-based approach to gang prevention and the importance of collaboration; and assist the United States Attorneys in implementing their district-wide anti-gang strategies. The webcasts are available at www.dojconnect.com.
- The Department provides funding for the Gang Resistance, Education and Training Program (GREAT) utilized in schools throughout the country. GREAT is a school-based, law enforcement officer-instructed curriculum. The program's primary objective is prevention and is intended as an immunization against delinquency, youth violence, and gang membership. GREAT lessons focus on providing life skills to students to help them avoid delinquent behavior and violence to solve problems. In FY 2006, the Department awarded \$15 million to over 140 GREAT sites in 36 states.
- The Department has long supported gang prevention activities such as the National Youth Gang Center, the Boys & Girls Clubs of America, and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's Gang Reduction Program.
- In addition, the Department has developed a wealth of resources and community policing solutions to help law enforcement and communities address the problem of gangs. These resources include guides for police on topics such as graffiti, bullying in schools, gun violence among youthful offenders, and witness intimidation; comprehensive gang prevention model programs; parent quick reference cards in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, and Hmong; multi-site evaluations of gang programs; innovations documents on network analysis and jail information-gathering; and a *Solutions to*

Address Gang Crime CD-ROM available free to the public containing DOJ anti-gang related resources and tools.

###

06-XXX